

MEDIA RELEASE



COMMITMENT WELCOME

28 March 2019

The Commissioner for Children and Young People Leanne McLean today welcomed the Tasmanian Government's commitment to providing more supported accommodation for homeless children and young people.

"The Government has listened to service providers and advocates for children and committed to more supported accommodation options for homeless children and young people," Ms McLean said.

"This commitment includes the completion of the expansion of Thyne House in Launceston and new youth foyers in Burnie and Hobart for young people aged 16-25.

"It is encouraging to see that existing youth supported accommodation facilities will be transitioned to Education First Youth Foyers with an emphasis on 'education first'."

Ms McLean said the new Youth at Risk Centre in the North will provide short-term accommodation for children under 16 years of age.

"This Centre, like Colville Place in the South, will provide vital short-term accommodation and go some way to filling a significant gap in the continuum of services for children under 16 who experience homelessness alone.

"However, there is still much work to be done to more effectively respond to the often complex care needs of children under 16 who are homeless and alone - a long-standing issue in Tasmania.

"Despite new, welcome short-term accommodation options, some children are unable to return home.

"These children need options for medium to long-term care, supported by intensive therapeutic and trauma-informed services. Governments and service providers must work together to better understand and address their complex needs."

Ms McLean also welcomed the establishment of a Taskforce to identify and prioritise care for children who are under 16 years of age, and at risk of homelessness and not in out of home care.

"But a commitment to the delivery of a strengthened policy and program response to children under 16 who are alone and homeless is still required. I look forward to further discussions with Government and the community sector to progress this important issue."

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